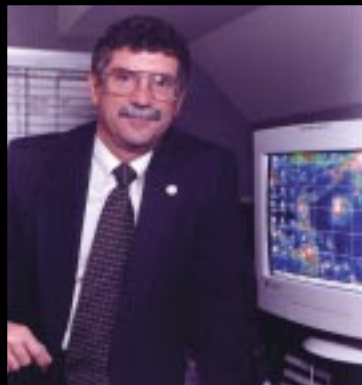




Emergency Management **UPDATE**

March 2002



(Photo courtesy Virginia Review)

Cline reappointed

Michael Cline will remain at the helm of state emergency management with his reappointment by Gov. Mark Warner on Jan. 31.

Cline joined the agency in 1972 and has been a member of the state disaster response team through 20 presidentially declared disasters, including hurricanes Agnes, Fran and Floyd. He has served in a number of agency positions, including director of operations.

He succeeded long-time VDEM State Coordinator Addison Slayton with his appointment by Gov. Jim Gilmore in June 1998 and will now move forward to continue advancing all-hazards preparedness and realize Gov. Warner's vision of a "Secure Virginia."

"We have a long history with Michael and VDEM and are pleased with his reappointment," says Larry Smith, Virginia Emergency Management Association president. "When the country is quite literally at war, this is definitely not a time to change commanders. We look forward to continuing our teamwork to promote public safety in these difficult times."

See Cline's message to Virginia emergency managers on page 3.

Warner promotes public safety with Secure Virginia Initiative

Describing Virginia as a "target-rich state," Gov. Mark Warner is taking decisive steps to ensure the Commonwealth is fully prepared to respond to and recover from a wide range of threats.

Less than one month after his Jan. 12 inauguration, Gov. Warner signed Executive Order 7, "The Secure Virginia Initiative," increasing the visibility of emergency management and seeking to provide responders with the tools needed to ensure the safety and security of all citizens.

He launched this program by establishing the Secure Virginia Panel — a special 20-member task force with a mission to evaluate and make recommendations to improve the state's preparedness for natural and man-made disasters, large-scale incident management and recovery, and terrorist or military attacks.

Under the leadership of John Hager, assistant to the governor for Commonwealth Preparedness, the group will build upon the work begun by former Gov. Jim Gilmore's Virginia Preparedness and Security Panel. Members will review the previous panel's recommendations and seek to refine and implement strategies to reduce any perceived vulnerabilities.

In his initial address to the panel, Gov. Warner cited the wide range of threats the state faces and their potential impacts on public health and safety, as well as the environment, economy and its citizens. He then asked, "Are we prepared?"

To aid in its evaluation of the state's emergency preparedness and response capabilities, the group will sponsor a stakeholder's forum on April 2. This session will include local and state



Making his mark. Gov. Mark Warner signs Executive Order 7, launching the Secure Virginia Initiative. (VDEM Photo by Bob Lambert.)

emergency management officials; fire, emergency medical and law enforcement officials; and private- and public-sector financial services, health care, technology, transportation and utility leaders.

To streamline roles and responsibilities, the governor has designated Hager as the single point of contact for the Executive Office of the President, Office of Homeland Security.

Hager will also address broad policy issues and coordinate grants to help improve statewide preparedness. John Marshall, Virginia secretary of public safety, is the single contact for federal law

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Threat assessment plays key role in special event planning

By Bob Lambert, Staff Writer

From the upcoming Aviation World's Fair in Hampton Roads to the annual Galax Bluegrass Festival, emergency managers are taking threat assessment seriously in planning for large-scale events.

While strategies have remained fairly constant, tightened security, crime scene investigation and mass casualty emergency medical care have added new layers to the event-planning process.

Hampton Roads, one of the state's most populous areas and home to a host of major military installations, has welcomed its share of big events such as Operation Sail in Hampton Roads and the Neptune Festival in Virginia Beach.

Next year, Newport News will host the 2003 Aviation World's Fair commemorating the centennial of the Wright Brothers' historic first flight at Kitty Hawk, N.C. With as many as 60 nations taking part, the air show is expected to draw a half million visitors April 7-27, 2003.

"In the past, terrorism was just part of the overall police and security functional planning process, with the emphasis on policing," says Wallace Twigg, VDEM Region III coordinator.

"Now, each local, national and international event has to be assessed closely for the level of risk and how it might play in the world situation at the time it is held."

Twigg has been working on air show preparations since early 2001 and says the Federal Bureau of Investigation and local and state law enforcement will coordinate more closely for this event.

"The last thing you want to do is cancel an event because you're too scared to pull it off,"

Twigg says. "Everybody is pushing for 'business as usual' but with an enhanced emphasis on security."

Located in the rolling hills of Caroline County, Fort A.P. Hill hosts the National Scout Jamboree every four years. Safeguarding a small city of more than 40,000 people poses some unique emergency management challenges.

Security was a factor in staging the 2001 event, which was to include a visit from President Bush (cancelled due to inclement weather). As planning gets under way for the 2005 event, heightened security will be a major focus.

"It really is all-hazards planning — not terrorist planning," says Region II Coordinator Cindi Causey, who guided preparations for last year's program.

"We had hazmat teams, the state bomb team and others ready to respond to any incident that might occur."

In the western portion of the state, Salem hosts a variety of athletic and community programs at its regional athletic complex; Blacksburg's Virginia Tech attracts thousands of college football and basketball fans; and the Roanoke Civic Center is a major regional draw.

The Martinsville Speedway, which runs three major auto races each year, has beefed up security, says Region I Coordinator Jack Rowell.

"Apathy is one of the biggest problems in rural areas," Rowell says. "A lot of citizens think they are so far removed from perceived targets that nothing can happen to them."

However, Rowell adds that rural communities have one advantage over their urban counterparts. "Everybody



High speed security. Large venues like the Richmond International Raceway offer special emergency management challenges. (Photo courtesy RIR.)

knows everybody else so they tend to be wary of strangers and unusual activity."

Mass casualties also pose a planning challenge. In the sparsely populated Southwest, the distances between population centers and hospitals would have responders racing the clock after a catastrophic event.

"Of the three regions, ours is the hardest to navigate due to the difficult terrain," Rowell

says. "A 65-mile drive that might take a little more than an hour in Northern Virginia might last three hours around here."

"A terrorist attack will not have a time line like other disasters we're accustomed to," Twigg adds. "Hurricanes, floods, tornadoes and hazmat events are all fairly predictable. A terrorist event gives you little or no warning and you don't know when it will end."

Secure Virginia (continued from page 1)

enforcement agencies. VDEM will continue its leadership role in all-hazards preparedness, reporting directly to the secretary of public safety.

"Virginia's emergency management community continues to be a critical element in today's expanding realm of preparedness and response," says VDEM State Coordinator Michael Cline. "Governor Warner is looking to us to ensure that every community in the Commonwealth is able to respond quickly to protect its citizens and minimize any adverse impacts from natural, man-made or terrorist events."

The governor praised the work of Gilmore's special state terrorism task force and the response efforts of state and local government following the Sept. 11 attacks.

"Make no mistake, the Commonwealth is well prepared today, thanks to the work of our local first responders, our private sector leaders, our State Police, our National Guard and many others," the governor said. "All they need from us is the coordination and resources to help."

More information on the Secure Virginia Panel and its membership is available on the governor's Web site at www.gov.state.va.us/Press_Policy.

Going for gold in CDE

For Virginia's community disaster educators, designing an effective preparedness message is much like an Olympic bobsled run.

To make the "run" count, they must cross the finish line by motivating citizens to take action, steering messages in the right direction and applying the right amount of pressure to avoid paralyzing fear.

VDEM made that job a little easier on Feb. 6 with its first Emergency Preparedness Community Outreach Conference. The event brought together national experts and local practitioners for a daylong seminar to develop and strengthen statewide disaster educational partnerships and resources.

"This conference was designed as an expanded networking opportunity," said VDEM Outreach Coordinator Rohn Brown, program organizer. "We brought in national experts our emergency managers don't normally see and highlighted some successful local programs. We gave participants a place to find ideas and tools they can take back to their own communities."

More than 100 emergency managers and community disaster educators participated in the meeting, featuring speakers from the American Red Cross, Virginia Commonwealth University, VDEM, Arlington County Public Affairs, National Weather Service and Virginia Cooperative Extension Service. (*View speaker presentations on the VDEM Web site at www.vaemergency.com/library/resource.cfm#cde.)*

Crisis communications and the social psychology of fear management were just a few of the topics designed to help inspire successful community disaster education. The program also featured several "best practices" segments showcasing successful community education programs (CDE).

"You have to give your message a community focus. You have to let people know something bad can happen to them," said featured speaker Rocky Lopes of the American Red Cross. "You're trying to sell an idea. If people don't believe it can happen to them, they won't invest time or money in it."

He adds, fear and apathy are big hurdles for today's disaster educators. "If you scare people too much they won't prepare at all," said Lopes. "Education is the answer. Fear can be diminished if we believe we can take steps to deal with it. The definition of panic is searching your brain for information and finding none."

Brown departs for ABC Board post

In his two years as VDEM's outreach coordinator, Rohn Brown created an impressive community disaster education program for Virginia localities.

We wish him well as he now channels his energies on public education endeavors with the Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control Board, which include spearheading the "None for the Road" program.



A Message from the State Coordinator

As we move forward from the events of Sept. 11, the mission of emergency management remains constant — to protect the Commonwealth's citizens and to help them recover whenever disasters or emergencies occur.

However, the level of public and governmental awareness has changed and increased almost geometrically. Perhaps for the first time since the Cold War era, both the general public and elected and appointed officials are focused on the need for preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery.

We are also very encouraged that our message of all-hazards preparedness has been well received at the federal and state levels. While much of the focus appears to be on terrorism, everyone involved agrees that a strong emergency management system will result in a strong response to a terrorist attack as well.

The coming months and years will provide an unparalleled opportunity for the emergency management community to strengthen and refine our capabilities. We also have a unique opportunity to develop private sector partnerships on a number of different levels. This will include enhanced assessment and planning opportunities and a potential for shared training and enhanced capabilities to deliver our message to the public.

There is already movement in the Virginia legislature to strengthen state code and to support a greater involvement with the private sector. Similar activities are ongoing at the federal level, both in Congress and at a number of agencies. We also know that a significant funding stream should open soon.

The federal funding is expected to provide significantly increased operational capabilities through equipment purchases and funding for planning and training. The real task ahead for emergency managers is to ensure that all functional and organizational areas are well coordinated, monies are well allocated and that we are prepared to interface smoothly when called upon to respond.

This is not going to be an easy task in light of the multitude of initiatives going forward — especially at the federal level. However, by establishing the Office of Commonwealth Preparedness, Gov. Warner has already begun to ensure a coordinated approach to policy development in Virginia and in our interface with the Office of Homeland Security.

We look forward to the Secure Virginia Initiative Stakeholder's Forum in April as a first step toward ensuring that all key players are involved as we move forward. We all need to do our best to keep our partners apprised of what we are doing and to work jointly to develop and implement needed policies and programs.

Need a rain check?

The latest drought status report from the state's Drought Monitoring Task Force is available for viewing or download on the VDEM Web site at www.vaemergency.com/newsroom/drought02/dmtfreportfeb02.pdf. Look for our new section on preparing for drought under "Preparing for Disasters."



Training Calendar

Emergency Management

Leadership and Influence
March 19-21/Williamsburg

ISC/EOC Interface
March 26-27/Leesburg

EOC Management & Operations
April 9-11/Fairfax

Principles of Emergency Mgmt.
April 23-25/Abingdon

Basic Public Information Officer
April 30-May 2/Charlottesville

Radiological

EOC Staff Training
March 19/Richmond

Radiological Officer Training
April 9/Henrico

Reservist Training

Nat. Weather Service Interface
March 28/Wakefield

VEOC Tabletop/Action Tracking
April 18/Richmond

Search and Rescue

CAP GSAR Institute (Part I)
March 22-24/Fort A.P. Hill

CAP GSAR Institute (Part II)
April 26-28/Fort A.P. Hill

SAR Council
April 27/Richmond

Technological Hazards

Public Safety Response to Terrorism (PSRT) - Awareness
March 17/South Boston

PSRT Courses (Norfolk)
Awareness: April 1
Tactical: April 2-3
Management: April 4-5

Hazmat Technician
April 8-19/Martinsville

On the campaign trail

Springtime signals the start of warm weather and a parade of public outreach and awareness campaigns:

Tornado Preparedness Day,
March 26 (drill at 9:45 a.m.)

Lightning Safety Awareness Week, April 28 – May 4 (also national week)

Hurricane Awareness Week,
May 19-25 (coincides with the national week and helps enable Virginians to prepare for the long hurricane season, June 1 to Nov. 30)

VDEM will produce media kits and Web resources to promote these statewide campaigns. *Contact Janet Clements by e-mail, pio@vdem.state.va.us or phone, (804) 897-6510, to learn more.*

Foresman receives Commonwealth Preparedness deputy appointment

VDEM offers congratulations and a fond farewell to George Foresman, who has moved from deputy state coordinator to deputy assistant to the governor for Commonwealth Preparedness.

Foresman joined VDEM in 1985 and has been a member of the state emergency response team on 17 presidentially declared disasters. He served in a number of agency positions including public assistance officer, planner and director of operations.

During his tenure, Foresman made numerous contributions to advance the visibility of state emergency management and strengthen VDEM's bonds with its local government partners. He was instrumental in developing the agency's Trade Court headquarters from the project's inception to its completion. As operations director, he enhanced VDEM's working relationships with other state agencies to forge a more effective response team.

A nationally recognized expert on terrorism preparedness, he was a member of the Advisory Panel to Assess Domestic Response Capabilities for Terrorism Involving Weapons of Mass Destruction (known as the "Gilmore Commission") and Gov. Jim Gilmore's Domestic Preparedness Working Group.

"George is still involved in state emergency management policy and continues to be active at the national level with federal representatives, representatives from other states and national associations in a number of related homeland security areas," says VDEM State Coordinator Michael Cline. "We continue to work with him regularly in his present capacity. While we obviously miss the skills and capabilities George brought to us directly, we look forward to a continued relationship and wish him the very best."



Tops in his field. George Foresman (center) worked tirelessly to heighten the visibility of Virginia emergency management in his years with VDEM (FEMA News Photo by Liz Roll.)



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